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# Christian Order

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## *Newman University College — Naples*

THE UNIVERSITY of Naples has some 45,000 students, about three times as many as Oxford and Cambridge combined. The Newman College is a rat-infested building in the midst of a noisy Neapolitan slum where an English priest is ministering to 26 students. These men, mostly from very poor homes, are seeking degrees in order to find gainful employment. They only attend the University for lectures and exams and otherwise live in squalid surroundings, never being sure whether there'll be enough in the kitty for the next meal. They are easy prey to the moral licence of Naples; soon discard any religion they may have learnt and succumb only too readily to the insidious propaganda of the Communists.

The Newman College was founded by Mgr. Bruno James ten years ago as a direct challenge to this situation and to provide a nucleus of carefully chosen students with the opportunity of continuing their studies under conditions they would never have believed possible.

The majority soon respond to the atmosphere of affection, trust and sense of personal responsibility which Mgr. James has so successfully fostered with endless patience and compassion.

It is a vital work, vital for them, vital for all of us in the West, whatever our nationality, who want to see the West survive against the forces of evil. But this work is sadly hampered by lack of funds. If you have read this far and believe that the task Mgr. James has set himself is not only just worthwhile but desperately important, would you help by joining in the sacrifices already being made by other friends and benefactors and send whatever you can to The Collegio Newman Fund at the address below. All contributions and letters will be acknowledged by the Hon. Treasurer (U.K.), Mr. D. Belson, Collier's Farm, Frieth, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon.

(This space has been kindly given by  
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Please let us know two or three weeks ahead if possible and please send us both new and old addresses. Thank you.

**CHRISTIAN ORDER** is a monthly magazine devoted to the promulgation of Catholic Social Teaching and incisive comment on current affairs in Church and State; at home and abroad; in the political, social and industrial fields.

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# Christian Order

EDITED BY

Paul Crane SJ

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## A Kind of Madness

THE EDITOR

**T**HERE is an attitude of mind in certain quarters of the Church today — particularly, perhaps, in the religious orders — which puzzles me more and more as the days and months go by. I can best explain what I have in mind by means of an example taken from the everyday world.

Let us suppose a company that markets a certain product. It is well run, efficient and making a reasonable profit. It is then decided to make an all-out effort to increase sales. To this end, experts are brought in and, on their advice, the company is streamlined, given a new image and new methods of manufacture, packaging and sales promotion introduced at every level. This done, the drive to find new markets begins. A year goes by. Little if any increase in sales is registered. Meanwhile, costs are mounting. Another year goes by and profits are shown to be dangerously down. The company is near the red. At this point, surely, if not long before, those responsible for the company's face-lift and its new production and promotion techniques would have been called to account by management and the closest consideration given to the problems raised by the failure of new methods. As likely as not these would have been discarded and a return made to



the old successful ways long before the red light appeared. Either that or the establishment, perhaps, of a temporary compromise between old and new whilst further investigations were made. In any event, one thing is certain; at the first sign of losses cutting into the business or, even, of profits being below the expected level, the new methods would have come into question and a halt been called. The one thing no business would allow to happen against the prospect of future loss would be the continuation of the new methods which brought its shadow across the horizon in the first place. No businessman in his senses would proceed in this fashion. Were he to go further and not merely fail to call in question the new methods when confronted with the prospect of loss, but intensify their use, he would, I think, be deemed the victim of mental affliction and removed from his post.

Yet this, precisely, is what has been happening since the Council and continues to happen in certain areas of the life of the Church today. There has been obvious and heavy failure in the wake of experiments introduced since the Second Vatican Council. Their introduction has been followed by shattering all-round loss in certain vital areas of the Church's life. Yet the reaction of those responsible for these experiments has not been apparently to reconsider them, but to intensify their use and widen their range; the exact opposite, in other words, of the policy that any sane group of businessmen would pursue. This strikes me as extraordinary, not because I take the ways of businessmen as a constant criterion in ecclesiastical matters, but because, in the case under review, the way of the businessman is so obviously that of commonsense whereas that of the churchman so obviously is not. The more disappointing the results that attend their experimentation, the more determined they seem to push it to further, way-out limits. That, sane men would say, is madness. I think the sane men are right.

There is no need, really, neither is there space to list examples. They abound in all those fields where the inno-

vators — in the name, quite wrongly, of the Vatican Council and with disastrous results — have introduced and sought to impose attitudes and an outlook that the Fathers of the Council never for a moment sanctioned. I am thinking particularly of the permissive and purposeless attitudes introduced into religious orders and adopted, in general, as part of a new approach to the young in so many sections of the Church. The blow dealt by permissiveness to religious life has been little short of catastrophic. Vocations are at an all-time low; the flight from the Orders has been unprecedented and massive. So far as the young in general are concerned, there is no evidence that the permissive approach extended towards them during the post-conciliar years has proved anything but heavily counter-productive. The best of them are not merely bewildered, but depressed and disgusted with it. The failure of vocations is to be found here, I am sure, and nowhere else. Let the Orders be true to themselves; stand true, once again, to their ideals and they will never be short of vocations.

This being the case and the failure of the new experimentation being so obvious, is it not long past the time that the false prophets inside religious life and out of it should be told with the utmost firmness where to get off and their policies and practices — in no way to be identified with the recommendations of Vatican II — brought firmly to a stop. The continuation of both despite their massive and increasingly obvious failure reminds one unpleasantly of the old Latin tag: *Deus Quos vult perdere dementat prius*: "Whom God would destroy, He first sends mad."

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We are privileged to reproduce here an address in defence of Catholic Schools given in Glasgow by Father John Tracy, S.J., at a Pro Fide meeting. Reference is, of course, to the situation in Scotland; but the substance of Father Tracy's address holds much of great importance for Catholics everywhere, especially at the present time. Father Tracy speaks with the authority on this subject of one who has spent his life teaching and was for many years, until his retirement some months ago, Headmaster of St. Aloysius College, Glasgow.

## Catholic Schools

JOHN TRACY, S.J.

**T**HE Catholic schools question has been pretty thoroughly aired. The fact that the question is raised with such persistent frequency suggests that continuous pressure is being applied to bring about the abolition of the Catholic schools. If that is so, pressure must be met with pressure.

Tonight I want to express my own personal opinions and convictions. I stress this because I want to have the maximum freedom to say what I think. Let me say at once what I am *not* trying to do. I am not trying to persuade you that all is well with education, religious or secular, in our Catholic schools and that all we have to do is to let well alone.

The gist of what I have to say tonight is this: Is it not time people stopped agitating about the Catholic schools and directed their attention, energy and zeal to the state and status of Christianity in non-Catholic schools? What I am asking is: How Christian are the non-denominational



schools? How Christian is Scotland today? These are questions. I am not raising them in any spirit of contentiousness or condemnation. I am raising them because they are of the first order of relevance in any discussion on integration. What are Catholics being asked to integrate into?

I shall try to examine in some depth four areas of discussion in the Catholic schools question:—

1. The validity of the argument for Catholic schools based on "Catholic atmosphere".
2. The validity of the objection to integration based on the atmosphere of non-denominational schools.
3. The validity of some typical modern concepts of religious education and their compatibility with Catholic concepts.
4. The validity of the argument that the Catholic schools are the last line of defence of Christianity in school education.

Throughout the course of what I have to say, I would ask you to discount emotion and sentiment. The criterion steadily to be applied is: true or false?

### *I. Catholic Atmosphere*

It is easy to dismiss the "Catholic atmosphere" argument with scepticism — "all too vague and nebulous"; or with cynicism — "all very well, but where will you find it?" But people who scoff at "Catholic atmosphere" will listen with solemn respect when educational experts lecture them on the enormous influence of environment on a child's education and development. So, for 'atmosphere' read 'environment'. My point tonight is that it is precisely in the field of moral and religious education that environment is so important — far more important, for example, than in a child's education in Mathematics or Chemistry.

Moral and religious education is not just the assimilation of moral and religious information; rather, it is moral



and religious formation, growth in a moral and religious way of living.

The argument from environment seems to present little difficulty so long as you leave out the word religion or religious. But that is something you cannot do when you are talking about Catholic education. The Scottish Bishops in 1966 called attention to the importance in the education of a Christian child of the largely unconscious learning of Christian preconceptions and attitudes, a process of learning by absorption from the atmosphere around him, the way of living around him, in his home and in his school. The Bishops were not vague and nebulous. They pointed out that such preconceptions and attitudes include many of the finer things of life — courtesy, self-discipline, loyalty, community spirit, and above all living Christian faith. That passage in the pastoral did not get the attention it deserved.

I wonder how many educationists and students of education have marked or underlined similar passages in John Dewey's *Democracy and Education*, Chapter 2, such as: ". . . this unconscious influence of environment is so subtle and pervasive that it affects the fibre of character and mind . . . breeding is acquired by habitual action, in response to habitual stimuli, not by conveying information . . . despite the never-ending play of correction and instruction, the surrounding atmosphere and spirit is in the end the chief agent in forming manners. And manners are but minor morals . . . Moreover, in major morals, conscious instruction is likely to be efficacious only in the degree in which it falls in with the general 'walk and conversation' of those who constitute the child's environment . . . in general, it may be said that the things which we take for granted without inquiry or reflection are just the things which determine our conscious thinking and decide our conclusions".

If you think Dewey somewhat dated, turn to the illustrious Report of the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland (1947): "The great need of the child for security

springs from the very instability and unformedness of his own self, impelled by its nature to reach out into the environment, yet marked for healthy growth only in the measure that it finds there fit nurture and constant reassurance. This need is met during the earliest years by the conditions of a good home, and in due time within the life of a good primary school. And at the secondary stage it assumes a fresh urgency . . . the security required is less physical than spiritual (par 52) . . . [and specifically of religious and moral education] Worship and the influence of good men and women pervading the whole life of a school are spiritual forces for which no formal instruction, however effective, could ever be a substitute (par. 560)".

Still closer to our own time is the Scottish Education Department's Memorandum on Primary Education in Scotland (1965): "The cultivation of desirable habits, attitudes, qualities of character and modes of behaviour cannot be reduced to the level of items on a time-table; it is nevertheless an essential part of education, which is achieved not through explicit instruction but as a result of the general tone and atmosphere of the school, the organisation and methods it employs, the standards it sets, and the opportunities the pupils are given to participate actively in its work and life" (p. 36).

I think I have said enough to submit that the educational case for Catholic schools where Catholic children are taught by Catholic teachers and share their way of life, is not lightly to be dismissed. I have not said that you will find a genuinely Catholic atmosphere in every Catholic school or that we have nowhere need of heart-searching and examining our consciences with a view to making our Catholic schools what they ought to be.

## II. *The Atmosphere of the Non-denominational School*

I turn now to the question of the atmosphere of the non-denominational school. No need to say what splendid schools so many of them are in so many ways. But what we are discussing tonight is the state and status of religious

education and the place of Christianity in these schools taken as a whole.

The first thing I want to say is that Catholics hold no monopoly of Christianity. There are non-Catholic headmasters and headmistresses and teaching staff who, as sincere, zealous Christians, committed to Christ and the spreading of His gospel, are the salt of the earth. I am certain that many of you are proud to number such men and women among your friends.

And the same is true of many of the children they teach, and of their parents. Less than a month ago I had the privilege of attending an all-day Saturday conference of teachers of religious education in non-Catholic schools. The large hall — the Renfield Centre — was filled with teachers, men and women, and I would have had to be both blind and deaf to be insensitive to the deep, genuine concern those teachers had for the spiritual well-being of their young charges.

But I do not think I am stating the case too strongly when I say that they are severely handicapped in their work as religious educators. Please understand that I am not blaming anybody. I am simply saying that this handicap is an inevitable consequence of the kind of society we are living in today. In so far as children reflect the beliefs and attitudes of their parents and their home, you must expect to find in a non-denominational school a variety of Christian beliefs reflecting in turn the historical fragmentation of the Christian Faith. You must expect to find a wide range of attitudes: thorough-going Christian commitment, fervent Judaism, and the devoutly held religions of the Near and Far East; total religious indifference, humanistic or communistic hostility; varying shades of agnosticism and atheism. And you must expect to find the same cross-sections of belief, or the lack of it, in the teaching staffs and in the head teachers on whom so much depends where religious education is concerned. Remember what I said: Leave emotion out of this. Just ask; true or false? Simplest of all, ask your non-Catholic



friends, especially teachers and ministers of religion, whether they think that, from the point of view of religious education, Catholics would be better or worse off in an integrated system.

Add to what I have said about the atmosphere of the non-denominational schools, in relation to religious education, the accepted principle that children should be educated as far as possible in accordance with the wishes of their parents. Add to that the corollary conscience clause, and you have a situation or environment in which "all religions or none must be presented as possible and equally valid alternatives" (Scottish Bishops). Try to understand the difficulty and complexity of this problem; try to sympathise with those who have to find a solution to it. For it is precisely the problem of the integrated school. Be clear about that. These schools *are* integrated. Incompletely, yes. But will it help their problem in any way to complete the integration by bringing in the Catholic schools?

We are often assured nowadays, particularly by the humanists, that this is no longer a Christian country, that Christianity is a minority belief, and so on. We may be living in a vicious circle. I would ask: how far is the decline of Christianity directly traceable to the decline in Church schools, and to the consequential decline in religious education?

### III. *Modern Concepts in Religious Education*

This brings me to current thinking on Religious Education. I believe that many of the modern notions on religious education — notions which may be percolating into Catholic theory and practice — have been determined less by child psychology or religious psychology than by the need to find a solution to the problem presented by the pluralist or secularist society I have just referred to. Little wonder that educationists should be preoccupied with questions about the relevance of religious education to contemporary life and society, or that pleas should be made

for the inclusion of comparative religion in the religious education syllabus.

While I freely and gratefully acknowledge that there are many valuable lessons for Catholic educationists to learn from non-Catholic studies in religion, I want to run through a brief selection of some current ideas and ask you whether you think they are compatible with the Catholic concept of religious education. Here is the selection:—

The teacher's approach to the religious lesson must be "open-ended"; it is useless simply to preach or dogmatise about one point of view; the authoritative approach must be abandoned in favour of research and speculation by the pupils themselves; we should not assume that pupils are Christian or that they are at least prepared to accept the authority of Christ or that we can learn something from His teaching; those teachers are working on the wrong lines who believe it is essential to communicate to pupils that Christianity is the one true religion; the gospel should be presented as only one answer among many and the Church as one voice among many; the purpose of a school is not to produce Christian citizens but pupils who leave school regarding Christianity as a live option; "pluralism must mean a truly open situation in which all have the right to persuade all"; "I regard with the gravest suspicion the teacher who looks on Religious Education as a form of evangelisation".

That selection has been extracted from a symposium on *Curriculum and Examinations in Religious Education*, published by Moray House College of Education in 1968, the eight authors from England and Scotland being all good Christians with many valuable contributions to make to religious education. In fairness to them I have to say that they suffer from being wrenched from their context, and that they were writing with non-denominational schools in mind. Significantly, some of them occasionally recognise that what they regard as illegitimate for a non-de-

nominal school may be in order for a denominational school. I am confident that if the problem I am raising was put to them some of them would say: Personally I should love to be forthrightly Christian and apostolic, but it would not be right for a pluralist community.

Let me now put a simple test to the Catholic teachers in the audience. How does this sentence sound to you: "The [religious education] syllabus is concerned with the whole child and its aim is not simply to present the Bible as a record of historical events, but to bring children *into an encounter with Jesus Christ*". Do you approve or not? Now let me read you the whole context from which I took that quotation:

"Since we no longer live in a Christian Society, we have no longer the right to establish our syllabus on the basis of what Biblical and ecclesiastical information the committed adult Christian ought to possess . . . Our syllabus ought, perhaps, to be framed in such a way that instead of presupposing belief, it should presuppose an inquiring attitude on the part of pupils who are searching for their faith rather than consolidating one that they already possess. Yet we still find syllabuses aiming to consolidate, or even worse than that, perhaps, intending to be evangelistic: . . ."

Then follows, as an example of that "even worse", the test sentence I gave you: "The [religious education] syllabus is concerned with the whole child and its aim is not simply to present the Bible as a record of historical events but to bring children *into an encounter with Jesus Christ*".

A final quotation which I take from a report in the Scottish Educational Journal of an address given in October 1970 at a regional conference of the Scottish Joint Council on Religious Education by a former principal teacher of religious education at Jordanhill College.

"Three guiding principles for a pupil-centred curriculum in religious education for adolescents were laid down . . . Firstly that they should frankly abandon an explicit — even an implicit — Christian



aim for religious education in state schools. . . . In the plural society of to-morrow's world such an aim would be inappropriate and self-defeating".

All this is a far cry from the living voice of the Divine Teacher Who taught as one having authority; from Our Lord's plea "Allow the little children to come to Me"; from St. Paul's cry of anguish to the Galatians "My children! I must go through the pains of giving birth to you again until Christ is formed in you"; from his exhortation to the Philippians "Let that mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ"; from his startling injunction to the Corinthians "Take me for your model, as I take Christ"; from the firm assurance of his "If anyone, even I myself or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you different from that one I have already preached to you, let him be anathema"; from St. John's gentler but no less firm "If anyone comes to you bringing a different doctrine, you must not receive him into your house". I suspect that if the Apostles were teaching today they would be accused of indoctrination.

By way of final contrast, may I refer you briefly to the second section of the Declaration on Christian Education of Vatican II, which begins with the words: "Since every Christian has become a new creature by rebirth from water and the Holy Ghost, so that he may be called what he truly is, a child of God, he is entitled to a Christian education". To me that has the ring of authentic Christianity.

To return to the practicalities of our discussion here to-night. I put two propositions to you:

1. that the kind of religious education proposed for non-denominational schools falls far short of what Catholic parents want for their children;
2. that it falls far short of the vocational aspirations and ideals of Catholic teachers.

#### IV. *The Last Line of Defence*

Finally, the argument that the Catholic schools are the last line of defence against the secularisation of Scottish schools. This might paradoxically be called the ecumenical argument: that one of the greatest services Catholics can render their fellow Christians is to hold on to their schools and maintain the right not only to teach religion in them but to educate children in Christianity, educate them to *be* Christians. So long as Catholics have the right, others will be able to claim it and so preserve the teaching of Christianity in Scottish schools.

Easy to laugh off this argument, as was done (I have read) at the last General Assembly; easy to see it merely as a vote-catching appeal for support for Catholic schools; easy to write it off as the expression of a wildly exaggerated fear. So again I ask: true or false? As I see it, the validity of the argument turns on whether there is, possible or actual, a serious threat to Christianity in the non-denominational schools. Apart from the watering-down of the Christian message that I have already pointed out, I offer you two reasons for thinking that there is a very real threat to the teaching of religion in Scottish schools, a threat to which no good Catholic should be indifferent.

First, suppose that the Catholic schools were abolished that the dispossessed Catholic children were added in substantial numbers to the existing plurality; that Catholic parents were insistent (as I hope they would be) that their children should be educated in Catholicism; that other Christian parents followed the example of the Catholic parents (as I hope they would) and demanded a Christian education for their children . . . . with mounting opposition, in such a situation, from those parents who would insist on their right to opt out. Is it altogether fanciful to imagine harassed head teachers and directors of education throwing up their hands in despair and crying "plague on all your houses" . . . . and solving the problem by eliminating religious education from the curriculum?

Second, I think that the threat may be already there. In my opinion, the greatest danger facing religious education in Scottish schools is that a well-meaning attempt may be made virtually to substitute moral education for religious education on the assumption that we can more easily arrive at an acceptable agreed syllabus or common code on moral behaviour than we can on religious doctrine. We are at present awaiting publication of a report by a committee set up by the Secretary of State in 1969 to examine moral and religious education in Scottish schools (other than Roman Catholic) and make recommendations for its improvement. Because of the almost insuperable difficulties presented by the pluralist, or integrated, school, I foresee a heavy bias towards situational moral instruction and away from doctrinal religious instruction. I expect to find in its recommendations that room should be found somewhere in the syllabus for study of the Bible at least as a literary work which has had a profound influence on Western thought, and for the study of Christianity at least as one of the great world religions which has had a profound influence on Western civilisation and culture. But that is pure speculation on my part. More constructively, my advice to you is to get hold of that report when it is published. When judging it, keep in mind that it is not intended to apply to Catholic schools; but ask yourself whether you think its recommendations adequate for the religious education of a Catholic child.

What is not speculation is the report to the Social and Morality Council of the working party on *Moral and Religious Education in County Schools* (published 1971). There are eleven pages in the report. The word God occurs in only one dubious sentence. Our Blessed Lord does not qualify for mention. A quotation from the report: "Religious communities, like the society of which they are members have the right to reproduce themselves. But we do not think that the State system of education in a plural society is the place they can do it. Our society today is truly plural, in the sense not only that numerous religious



communities exist in it but also that a large section of it is non-believing. The State cannot legislate for a unity in the schools which does not exist outside them". And another: "The national duty of the county schools is twofold: 1. to reinforce common foundations in moral values; 2. to encourage sympathetic understanding of a religious approach to life". That sounds liberal enough . . . . until you reflect that an atheist can have a sympathetic understanding of a religious approach to life, and a Catholic can have a sympathetic understanding of a humanist approach to life.

What is not speculation is that moral education to the exclusion of religious education is precisely the aim of the humanists. Of course, the humanists will tell you, children may and even should be taught *about* religion, *about* Christ and Christianity, just as they should be taught about other world religions and their founders. Don't be taken in by such cant. Teaching *about* Christianity is no more teaching Christianity than teaching *about* Art or Poetry or Music is teaching Art or Poetry or Music. While it is very commendable to talk about reinforcing common foundations in morality, do you seriously think that this will solve the problem of social disunity? In the report from which I have already quoted, I can find no hint of any awareness that conflict exists, and must always exist, between the morality of secular humanism and Christian morality. They are, and will remain, irreconcilable. And I am certain that if the humanists succeed in getting their way, future generations of Scottish children will hunger for bread and be given a stone: they will get a Godless morality and Christianity without Christ.

The last line of defence argument is: Keep your Catholic schools, make them what they ought to be, keep the sacred flame of Christian tradition alive, and Christianity will surely rise again in our Scottish schools as the light of the world.

# Sound Theology

## Pastoral for Trinity Sunday

CARDINAL HEENAN

**T**HEOLOGY used to be the preserve of the clergy. Few even among scholarly laymen made it a serious study. They were satisfied that their priests who had spent years studying philosophy and theology would give them the teaching of the Church from the pulpit. But to-day more of the laity are turning to theology. Religion is said to be in decline but in this at least there has been a real advance.

Young people, too, are taking a new interest in religion. They may not read theological books but they enjoy what they regard as religious experiences. These are sometimes no more than hallucinations following the use of drugs. They are nevertheless a sign that some young people are genuinely searching for guidance. Their so-called meditations may be of doubtful spiritual value in themselves but at least they show the spiritual longings of the growing generation. It would be no less wrong to laugh at their efforts than to regard them as proof that youth has rediscovered God. Most young people would probably deny that they are turning to God or that they believe in God. Their new found admiration for Christ need not have a religious explanation. It may be that they have merely become disillusioned with their former heroes. Pop stars and revolutionaries make less appeal to youth than they did three or four years ago. One characteristic of young men and women is contempt for material comfort. Not only in this country but nearly everywhere in the world they are more anxious to help the needy and the oppressed than to make money for themselves. They may say that they are not religious but their ideals come very close to the definition of religion given by St. James (James 1, 26).

Rejecting the standards offered by their elders they are ready to revolt against anyone in authority — civic, academic or religious. They are still only at the protesting stage. They repudiate existing authority but have not yet found a satisfying substitute. That is where the Church can help them. They must be directed not to Jesus Christ, Superstar, but to Jesus Christ, Son of God. Jesus the gentle bewildered leader persecuted by priests and politicians may serve as hero in a stage musical but he cannot become the centre of their spiritual lives. Young people to-day seek to an unprecedented degree love and re-assurance. Their deepest cravings can be satisfied only by Christ our Lord. It is of the utmost importance that they should be told the truth about Christ. The Holy See has recently reminded the bishops that as shepherds they must lead their flocks to healthy pasture. Even some Catholics are misled by errors which may be superficially attractive but are destructive of the faith. New doctrines are being taught which contradict basic teaching of the Church. It is tragic at a moment when young people are looking to Jesus Christ in admiration that some theologians should be denying that Christ is God. The Creed is wrong, they say, in affirming that He is one in substance with the Father. They say He was only a human person in whom God was present. In other words, they reject the doctrines of the Blessed Trinity and the Incarnation which are the foundation of our faith.

To-day is Trinity Sunday and there could be no more suitable day on which to reaffirm our belief in these sacred mysteries. The catechism (Q.40) tells us clearly what is meant by the Incarnation. "I mean by the Incarnation that God the Son took to himself the nature of man: 'the Word was made flesh' (John 1, 14)." The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit "are all one and the same God" (Q.26). The three Persons of the Blessed Trinity are equal. That is why we begin the Mass with the words "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Cor. XIII, 13).

Until a short time ago we all used to bow our heads at the mention of the holy name of Jesus. As children in school we were so well trained that this act of reverence became the habit of a lifetime. It is time that parents and teachers re-introduced this thoroughly Catholic practice. "In the name of Jesus" St. Paul tells us "every knee should bow in heaven and on earth" (Phil. II, 10).

That Christ is the Son of God is not of interest only to theologians. It is a matter of life for every Christian: "This is eternal life: that they may know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent" (John XVII, 3). Each time we offer Holy Mass we say of Christ that it is "through Him, with Him and in Him" that we give glory to the Father. It was through Him that all things were made. Through Him we are saved. If He were no more than a man He could not be our Saviour nor could He live within us. Those who say that Jesus neither claimed to be God nor knew He was God make mockery of the Christian religion. That is why the Pope has called upon the bishops whom the Holy Ghost has placed to rule the Church of God (Acts XX, 28) to draw the attention of priests and people to the dangers of the new modernism which throws doubt on the divinity of Christ and the trinity of persons in God.

On this last Sunday of Our Lady's month of May I urge you to renew your faith in the Blessed Trinity and the Incarnation of the Son of God and to pledge loyalty to the successor of St. Peter with whose words I end this message:—

"Beloved, be warned in time. Do not be carried away by the errors of lawless men and lose the firm ground you are standing on. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory now and forever. Amen." (2 Peter III, 17-18).

*Given at Westminster on the fourth day of May, the feast of the Blessed Martyrs of England and Wales, in the year of Our Lord nineteen hundred and seventy-two.*



# Indian Ocean: the Next Round

CZESLAW JESMAN

**THE SOVIET** plan of world conquest — every bit as insane as that of Hitler and doomed, as his was, to a dismal end in the fullness of time — can be compared to a giant jig-saw puzzle. However convoluted its pieces may appear and however unrelated to each other, once the process of putting them together begins — the strategic deployment of forces prior to a major drive — the overall significance of the whole becomes transparently and, indeed, frighteningly manifest.

About eighteen months ago, some of London's political observers of the international scene pooh-poohed the idea that the Soviet Union had in mind the mounting of a pincer movement across the Indian ocean, which was to be directed ultimately at the soft, coastal underbelly of Red China's land mass. The careful seeding of Soviet agencies throughout this vast area was dismissed as a perfectly understandable process of support for Russia's expanding trade by sea. Soviet electronic spy ships were thought of as ocean-going trawlers or fishery research vessels. The activity centred round the Soviet bases set up in the Antarctic during President Roosevelt's terms of office, when treason rode high in Washington, was thought of as no more than normal concentration on the mysteries of glaciology. And the island strategy of Moscow during recent years — her policy of infiltration into the islands surrounding the African Continent — was not seen as related to Russia's grand design against Communist China.

As this article is being typed, a Communist-prompted rebellion has been put down in the Malagasy Republic — the old Madagascar — at the regrettable cost of at least

15 killed and 400 wounded. In connection with this rebellion, Moscow Radio had this to say on April 3rd.:

"There has been no substantial change on the Island since the presidential elections held two months ago. In the same way as before the poll, the leaders of the country in Tananarive (the capital) continue to take reprisals against those who dare to voice criticism, frequently seizing progressive papers and so on. Hundreds of the Malagasy people, including seven parliamentary Deputies, are held in gaol for activities in opposition to the Government. The population is dissatisfied with the present situation in Madagascar."

This was before the riots. Then:

"Thirty dead, 180 injured and about 400 people arrested; this represents the balance of the tragic events which took place in the Malagasy capital last Saturday and Sunday. The fact that the President of the Republic, Philibert Tsiranana, has introduced a state of emergency throughout the country shows that the situation on the Island is very serious. Madagascar resembles a seriously ill man whose sickness has reached a crisis. The student riots are one symptom of this crisis."

Such was the summing up of the affairs of the Island of Malagasy on May 15th, after the riots. Moscow radio did not attempt to identify the germ or virus responsible for the serious illness. It is not difficult to discern. Only a simpleton would think that the Communist-inspired riots on the Island were meant by Moscow as part of the preliminary for a Soviet attack on Africa. But, they could well represent a successful stage in the Soviet Union's overall Indian-ocean drive against China, tying in with other moves as part of Moscow's island strategy against Peking. Thus, for example, on Zanzibar a little before the riots in the Malagasy Republic, Sheikh Karume, its brutal boss and a faithful henchman of the Peking Mafia, was gunned to death. Under his tyrannical and ludicrous rule Zanzibar and its island-dependency of Pemba were a Chinese sphere

of influence. This is no longer the case.

Further north at the tip of the Arabian Peninsula, Abd-al-Fatah Isma'il, Secretary General of the National Liberation Front of South Yemen, the erstwhile British Protectorate of Aden, has denied that the Island of Socotra (part of South Yemen, guarding the approaches to the Red Sea) has been turned into a Soviet naval base and arsenal. He supported his denial with the statement that his country, South Yemen, was a natural target for hostile propaganda because of its strategic and economic importance. The thing one has to remember, however, is that, in the case of the Soviet Union and its Satellites, denials of this kind can always be accepted quite safely as confirmation of the fact or situation they are purporting to deny. This time, however, corroborative evidence is to be had from an impeccable source. On May 15th, the Iraqi News Agency reported from Aden that a Soviet destroyer had arrived in the harbour on a visit of several days. Probably as a result of inexperience, the journalist responsible for the report let the cat out of the bag. He said that the Soviet destroyer carried more than a hundred *soldiers* and *officers*; not merely sailors or crew, but *soldiers*. Now the nearest place where a concentration of Soviet land troops or military specialists of this size could be located is Socotra, a barren, bitter and inhospitable rock whose garrison would most certainly need periods of rest elsewhere if its members were to remain sane.

Once again, any deduction from the Socotra-Aden story of a massive Soviet move against the African mainland should be dismissed. One reason for this amongst others is that, nowadays, Soviet influence on the African Continent is shrinking as that of the Chinese continues to grow. The Tanzam railway is forging ahead; President Siad Barre of Somalia is being received in Peking, at the moment of writing, as a very important person indeed; in Dar-es-Salaam, the Peking faction within the Mozambique insurgents is gaining the upper hand. And these are by no means the only recent Chinese successes in Africa. Small wonder,

therefore, that Moscow appears to be getting tired of its African entanglements: for the time being, these would appear to be of only marginal interest to the Russians. At the same time, they cannot afford to ignore the Red Chinese. The Soviet policy of outflanking Communist China across the Indian Ocean continues.

In further evidence of this the following straight quotation of April 4th from Moscow Radio's home service and the Tass Agency is worth whole volumes in support of the likelihood of this design. Here it is:

"No anti-Soviet frauds cooked up by imperialist propaganda can camouflage the fact that the U.S.A. plans to set up additional U.S. bases in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, Victor Mayevsky writes in *Pravda*. He was commenting on the false report by Lisbon, echoed by the Indonesian newspaper, *Indonesia Raya*, which said that the Portuguese half of the Island of Timor — the other half of the Island belongs to Indonesia — has become the scene of incidents triggered off by Soviet activities on the Island.

"The commentator notes that the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Adam Malik, has categorically rejected these reports as utterly false. Malik wrote in the Indonesian paper, *Kompas*, that the 'border incidents' on the Island of Timor were connected with local disputes.

"The commentator notes that the Soviet Union's policy is well known. It accords with the vital interests of the peoples of Asia, meets with broad support and is carried out for the further development of good relations between the Soviet Union and the countries of Asia.

"Such developments, leading to a strengthening of the forces of national liberation and progress in Asia, do not suit either the old or the new colonialists, Victor Mayevsky insists. This is precisely why imperialist propaganda, which uses all sorts of reactionary elements in Asian countries, is whipping up a wave of



anti-Communism and trying to invent the myth of 'a Soviet threat' in the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia."

One could almost whoop for joy at this primer of Soviet double-speak and political indoctrination. Its translucent mendacity and endearing infantilism are really matchless. Moscow has come to the conclusion that the time is ripe for opening the drive on the Asian waters of the Indian Ocean and synchronizing this with the continued pursuit of its island strategy off the coast of East Africa and further East. The time is ripe. Indonesia is in a very parlous state indeed, the West is occupied elsewhere, Australia and New Zealand, in Moscow's view, can be dismissed as local encumbrances and nothing more. Comrade Mayevsky's comments indicate the line of approach. Truly, he has earned a Pulitzer Prize for his gem of a report. It makes all clear so far as the south-east tip of the Indian Ocean is concerned. All we need now is a little intelligent exploration into the present situation in Ceylon — now the Republic of Sri Lanka — where motherly Madam Bandaranaike and her assorted group of Communists are allowing the Soviet Union increasing latitude, and the Maldivé Islands, where Russia is the only nation to maintain an embassy since this forgotten cluster of islands became independent on July 26th, 1965.

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The movement afoot in the Church at the moment to identify the Gospel message with a call for the total liberation of man through the establishment of an earthly paradise—naively thought of in doctrinaire-socialist terms — is gaining fresh ground every day.

As usual, those who make its propaganda are fringe groups of daffy priests and religious, bent on bowing the knee to a secularist world. They and their followers constitute the New Left in the Church towards which Communists in all countries have, of course, been busy making overtures for a considerable time.

# The Gospels and Social Justice

## 4: THE NEW CATHOLIC LEFT

### THE EDITOR

**P**REVIOUS articles in this series have laid stress on the essentially spiritual nature of the Gospel message. Christ came on earth to deliver men from sin; his kingdom was not to be on this earth through the removal of existing inequalities, but in the hearts of men and belong to the poor in spirit. His whole concern was with the salvation of mankind, in no way with the establishment of an earthly paradise.

### *The Gospel and Liberation*

What we have to take stock of now and examine at

some length in this and a final article, is the tendency, increasingly pronounced in certain church circles at the present time, to portray the Gospel as calling primarily for the liberation of man from what are described as unjust and oppressive social and political conditions. This is not said in so many words. It is a matter, rather, of the creation of a strong impression which, as we shall see, is inserted into the subconscious of the Faithful through the use of double-talk, insinuation, innuendo and endless repetition. At the same time and more positively, through the employment of the same methods, the social ideal held out to Christians, as in accord with the Gospel message, is that of an equalitarian Socialist society. By this is meant, not the programme of Mr. Harold Wilson and the Labour Party, but the establishment of a classless society, where the profit-motive is abolished and the people are in charge of the nationalised means of production, distribution and exchange. Christ, in other words, was the first Socialist.

Again, this is not said plainly in so many words. It is manufactured as a climate of opinion, which is built up through insinuation and double-talk. I am not speaking here in terms of conspiracy, though I think it would be foolish to rule it out from every aspect of the matter under discussion in this article. I am perfectly content in this context to regard it as no more than a breathing together on the part of like-minded Catholic Progressives to establish in the minds of the Faithful, as integral to the Gospel message of salvation, man's liberation from social and political oppression. In illustration, one might take the case of France in the first months of this year, 1972. The kind of thing being said there ties in with a similar trend in other European countries — for example, Belgium — South America and the United States.

### *The French Catholic Scene*

An article by Father M. D. Bouyer, O.P. in *Vie Catholique Illustré* for February 9th, 1972 bears the title

CHRISTIAN ORDER, SEPTEMBER, 1972

"*Un Jesus Dangereux*", that is "A Jesus Who Lived Dangerously". In this article, the Author portrays Christ as confronting and, indeed, exposing the Jewish Establishment of his day as living, indeed, according to the Law of Moses, but only that its members might use it to their own advantage and profit, as a means of enriching themselves at the expense of the people (common man). This note of confrontation runs through the whole article, with its implication that Christians should follow the Christ portrayed throughout as concerned more with the class struggle than with the sins of men. Christ and his liberating and redemptive work are presented so ambiguously in this article that, at the end of it, the Christian reader could hardly be blamed for believing that the salvation of his immortal soul is intimately tied up with the destruction of capitalism, the abolition of private property and the establishment of an egalitarian, classless society; whilst the call given to him personally is that, to be like Christ, he, too must live dangerously; that is, confront the Establishment of his own day and involve himself in the class struggle; get out with his banner and protest.

### *Gospel and Socialism*

The same note is struck in a poem of heroic dimensions which appeared about the same time in *Jeunes en Marche*, the Review published by those in charge of the French scouts and guides. An accompanying note described the poem as the fruit of discussions held round camp fires last summer (1971) between priests and laymen actively attached to the Movement — hardly a likely place, I would have thought, for the intelligent study of social and political issues in their relationship to religion. Quite openly it is claimed in this vast poem that the revolution called for in it is that of the Gospels. And the revolution is in no way spiritual; it is wholly man-centred and social, portrayed in terms of confrontation and revolt. As with the article of Father Bouyer, O.P. the whole concept of the liberation (redemption) of man is wrapped — deliberately



or otherwise, I do not know — in ambiguity. The last verse of this great, long poem seems designed to leave the reader with the impression that the redemption (liberation) brought by Christ leads inevitably to the establishment here on earth of a society that has freed itself from the profit motive and abolished private property. In other words, the liberation (redemption) brought by Our Lord is conditional, so to say, on the establishment here on earth of a truly Socialist (Marxist/Christian as they would say) society. Scouts and guides, as true Christians, must confront the Establishment which resists this process and throw themselves wholeheartedly into the class struggle. And they must do this *in the name of the Gospel*, indeed, of Christ Himself. This is the line put forward, but it is essential, at the same time, to remember here and throughout this study that it is not stated openly and directly. It is implied and insinuated: the method chosen most frequently seems to be that of using the word liberation (redemption) in wholly ambiguous terms so that, whilst never clear whether the writer sees Christ as coming on earth to liberate (redeem) men from sin or oppressive social and political conditions or both, the *whole tone of the article* is such as to lead the reader to believe that the liberation of man from oppressive social and political conditions was integral to his message and, in fact, constituted Christ's primary task.

### *Programme for Catholic France*

The line given out by Father Bouyer to readers of *Vie Catholique Illustré* and clerical and lay activists to French scouts and guides appears, at a more sinister level, to have been embodied in a vast programme of study and debate to be set before the Bishops of France along with lay representatives of French Catholic Action organizations and the priests and religious who are attached to them. The ambiguity already noted in the two other documents so far studied in this article is at once apparent in the very title of this programme, "The Liberation of Man and Salvation in Jesus Christ". There then follows a veritable barrage of subtitles in the form of rhetorical questions which highlight the

text and which leave the reader with the impression — though never stated openly — that he is being called as a Christian to confront an unjust Establishment and free his fellows from oppressive social and political structures. Liberation from Satan and sin, along with Christ's call in the Gospels to spiritual combat and the establishment of his kingdom in the hearts of men, whilst never actually denied, are made to recede so far into the background of this document as to be devoid of any significant impact on the consciousness of the reader. So far as I can see from a most careful study of these high-lighted headings, Christ's essentially spiritual redemptive task and man's obligation, in consequence, to spiritual combat are reduced, without being denied in so many words, to no more than the feeblest of undertones throughout this programme. This is the way it is done. Indeed, the document appears so loaded in favour of a secularist approach to the Christian vocation that one can almost guess in advance what the resolutions coming out of the 1972 Congress of French Catholics will be.

As if to leave nothing to chance in this matter, a Commission called "Justice in Paris" set out in relatively direct and stark fashion the line of approach already implied so strongly in the documents already referred to in this article. The document in which the Commission set down its thoughts is entitled "Justice and Development in the Paris Region". The first part of this document, which was presented to the French Council of Priests on January 8th, 1972, was published early in February of this year. In answer to its own rhetorical questions which it put to members of lay-apostolate organizations — "How is liberation to be brought about? Is it a matter of transforming men's hearts? Or of political action? Of class struggle? Of patience or violence?" — the document answers very quickly with a statement of intention on the part of those responsible for it, which reveals the thinking of the members of the Commission responsible for it. The task of the members of lay-apostolate organizations is described in

general yet chilling terms as being "to strip away the altogether idealistic and subjective illusion according to which it is enough to change men's hearts in order that the problems which confront them may be solved". In other words, we are back again to the need for Christian action in the social and political fields to achieve man's liberation from oppressive and "sinful" structures. Sin and Hell recede into the background overshadowed by social evil (the Marxist influence is obvious here) and the consequent need for social struggle.

### *Confrontation and Salvation*

More, much more, could be said of the same line of approach, as it is imposed on Christians today, not only in France, but elsewhere. Enough, I think, has been said to indicate the extent to which — through a confused and ambiguous presentation of the redeeming (liberating) work of Christ — the Christian is being left increasingly with the impression that, to achieve salvation, he must seek confrontation with existing Establishments, as they are called, and engage in the class struggle to the point, where necessary, not merely of social, but political and, indeed, armed revolution. This is being imposed on him today by dissident clerics and religious as an integral part of the Gospel message. To be a good Christian soldier today he must, in fact, have a real live gun in his hand.

### *Communists seek Collaboration*

Under the circumstances, as we have described them so far in this article, it is hardly to be wondered at that the Communist Party has stepped up its offers of collaboration with French Catholics. On December 14th, last year, 1971, *La Croix* published an interview with Georges Marchais, Secretary General of the French Communist Party, which was subsequently distributed by the thousand as a hand-out at church doors all over France with the approval of the paper itself. In it, Marchais said, "The construction of a Socialist society does not presume the

adherence of every citizen to a materialistic creed. It presupposes something quite different — the transfer to the nation of the means of production and exchange and the exercise of power by the workers and mass of the people. Is there anything in the Christian Faith which is opposed to this ideal? I do not myself believe it". (Which showed how much he knew about the social teaching of the Church!) Given the current interpretation of the Gospel message as a call for the liberation of man from oppressive class structures and given the speed with which this bogus interpretation of Christ's redeeming work is gaining ground in France at the present time, Georges Marchais is hardly to be blamed for affecting to discern an identity of aim between Communism and Catholicism and calling on adherents of both creeds (for Communism is a creed) to unite round it with a view to its concrete achievement. Marchais, of course, knows exactly what he is doing. He would not be Secretary General of the French Communist Party if he did not. His aim — like that of every good Communist under similar circumstances — is to cash in on the naive stupidity of France's Catholic Left, with a view to using it for his own ultimate purpose, which is the take-over of France. Once this is achieved, he will turn on his pathetically stupid Catholic allies and crush not only them, but the Church of which they are such unpleasant members. I am reminded of the reply years ago of a member of the British Communist Party to a comrade who told him off for shaking hands with a Labour Member of Parliament. "I take him by the hand now", he said, "as a prelude to taking him later by the throat".

### *Fringe Groups and the Berrigans*

Things would be bad enough if the situation described above were confined to France. Unfortunately it is not. In the weeks before the Italian General Election last May, the Secretary General of the Italian Communist Party was trotting out the same line as his French counterpart and talking about the benefits Italy would receive from a



Coalition Government composed of Communists, Catholics of the Left and Socialists. And one has only to look at the South and North American scene to see the whole debilitating trend in process, especially amongst the young — and, of these, very specially priests and religious — in the Catholic Church. On Catholics of both continents the Gospel is being imposed increasingly by fringe groups of clerics and daffy religious in terms of liberation from the “violence” of oppressive structures and Catholics are called, in the name of Christ, to confrontation with existing Establishments, class-war and violence — to the point, where necessary, of armed revolution. The guerilla — rural or urban — is turned into a hero, a kind of latter-day Robin Hood, whilst killers like Che Guevara are set, with the ex-priest Camilo Torres, at the head of young South America’s litany of “saints”. Meanwhile, in the States, the Berrigan Brothers are idolized as protagonists of the true Gospel message of pacifism amongst men, which means peace at any price and justice by any means, however violent, which these “sweet people”, as they are called, in their consummate and condescending arrogance deem suited to its achievement. No matter if you break the law; if you feel you should do so in the interests of peace, go right ahead and do it; you have to use your own type of violence against the violence of “sinful” and oppressive structures (or, rather, those which the Berrigans in their charismatic wisdom deem oppressive) which Establishments everywhere, including that of the “Institutional” Church, have thrust on the backs of the pure-minded poor, of whom the Berrigans, in the eyes of their adulators, are the perfect exemplars. Then, if you get held up in your charismatic career and get put in gaol because society objects to your breaking its laws in order that your point of view may find a niche in citizens hearts; if you get gaoled for your pains, why, no matter, you are straightaway a martyr and pop theologians go rushing into print to justify your nasty little law-breaking action in terms of prophetic witness — whatever that may mean!

## *Secularised Gospel Message*

Thus the New Catholic Left is born round a secularised Gospel message or the Gospel message is secularised to suit the needs of the New Catholic Left, taking its cue, in the last analysis, from Sartre and Camus rather than Marx, with pointless spontaneity as its habitual mode of action, intellectual laziness as its characteristic and political naivete of the worst kind as its most noticeably abiding hall-mark. There is nothing of the sturdiness of the old Catholic Labour radical — the man who knew his social encyclicals and was utterly loyal to the Pope — about this lot. They are radical only in the eyes of those who think of doctrinaire Socialism as a radical creed instead of the distorted, ruthless and reactionary instrument of New Class advantage which it most certainly is. Nevertheless, the danger they bring, these Catholics of the New Left, is that which comes with blindness, the blindness that secularism brings. In their hands, the Gospel is being turned into a call to thoughtless activism and class war, thereby creating within the Church today — and creating fast — a climate of opinion that leads many into mental alliance with Communism and blinds many times more to its menace. As a result, the Church is weak now as never before in face of its worst enemy and, because it is weak, the West, too, is weak with that awful weakness of the spirit, which is bringing the day of its enslavement — from which there may well be no liberation — ever more near.

### *Four Points on French Catholics*

Let us come back to the present attempt, already described in this article, to present to French Catholics Christ's message in the Gospels in terms of the liberation of man from social and political oppression. Four points characterise this endeavour. In the first place, it represents a *concerted* effort. Suddenly, overnight as it were, the Catholic Press, the Scout Movement, Organization of the Lay Apostolate, the Council of French Priests, to say

nothing of books, pamphlets hand-outs and the rest are at one in their presentation of the Gospel message as calling for man's deliverance from political and social oppression. Secondly, this interpretation of the Gospel message, as we have seen in preceding articles, is quite without doctrinal foundation. Thirdly, the approach through all channels is always ambiguous and by innuendo, yet heavily pressurised. Those who call, for example, in the name of the Gospel for the liberation of the whole man, the total liberation of man, leave their listeners and readers confused as to whether they have in mind the liberation of man from sin, which was the purpose of Christ's redeeming work, or his liberation from oppressive social and political conditions, which was in no way integral to it; yet, the whole tone of what they write or say — the drift of it — appears to leave their readers or listeners with the one, very strong impression that the latter interpretation of Christ's mission on earth is the only valid one. Fourthly and finally, the pressure brought to bear on French Catholics to adopt this secularised version of liberation (redemption) is extremely heavy, precisely because the authority of the Gospel is quoted constantly in its support.

### *The Gospel and Society*

Under these circumstances — given the present drive not only in France, but elsewhere, to present the Gospel message in terms of man's liberation from the evils of earthly oppression — it seems essential to devote what remains of this article and the whole of that which follows and concludes this series, to an examination of what Gospel and Church have to say — if they have anything at all to say — concerning the needs of man in society. In the light of what has been said so far in this article, here is the question that needs to be asked posed as fairly as I possibly can: Does the Catholic Faith impose or, indeed, allow the view that the liberation of man from oppression on this earth — ambiguously presented, as it usually is, and with strong Socialist overtones — constitutes an integral part of the Gospel message of salvation?

This is the question that has to be asked and those who have had the forbearance to read the third and fourth articles of this series will know what the answer must be.

It will be a help, perhaps, if I summarise it here. The message of Christ in the Gospels is essentially that of personal salvation; liberation — if you wish to use the word — from the slavery of sin, which Satan seeks to impose on mankind. The struggle to which Christ calls men expressly is not social, but spiritual; his kingdom is not of this world, but within their hearts; it is reserved not for the materially poor, but for all those, whatever their status, who are poor in spirit, for it is they — detached from the things of this earth, whether they be rich or poor — who are open to the flow of sanctifying grace. This, then, is the Gospel message. It is one of *spiritual* — as opposed to material — salvation. Yet, personal though it is in essential content, the Gospel message has, at the same time, social repercussions of immense significance and, in this sense, may be said, with truth, to contain a social message, dependent for its efficacy on the extent to which men make their own the message of spiritual salvation, which is the essence of Christ's teaching in the Gospels. Those who do this are gifted at Baptism with supernatural life — a manner of living that is beyond their nature's powers — and enabled thereby to be united in loving union with God in Heaven after death; meanwhile, on earth, to love Him above all things, which means putting his interests steadily first, and others for his sake. Thus, the social effect of the Gospels — the social side of its message — is found in the presence on earth of that society of men and women who live the life of grace and love one another in and for Christ. These are God's adopted sons, who share brotherhood, in consequence, with each other in Jesus Christ. The society to which Christ calls us in the Gospels is formed of those who, as adopted sons of God, share life and brotherhood in Him because they have heeded his call — the essential message of the Gospels — to personal and spiritual salvation. These are the members of his Church — a visible society



that is supernatural in aim and in essential content — which He founded for the extension of his kingdom in the hearts of men. The Church exists — for this it was founded by Christ Our Lord — to implement the Gospel message; that is, to extend to all men through time the means of personal salvation. By no stretch of the imagination can this work of the Church or the Gospel message, which is in its keeping, be conceived as integrally connected with the liberation of man from earthly oppression through the establishment of a Socialist society.

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### Criteria for Criticism

Anyone who believes he is being called by his conscience — and thus ultimately by God — to criticize the Church will have to test his intention in a specially careful way, to make certain that there is no danger of having confused self-seeking with concern, conceit with an awareness of his responsibility, and discontent with his personal desire for reform. It is not always easy for us human beings with our continually troublesome weaknesses to make these distinctions. But on the other hand difficulty does not absolve us from our responsibility to act. If criticism comes not from an angry onlooker outside the community, but from an anxious and compassionate heart within it, if it is fed by responsibility, by love for our brothers and sisters, and ultimately by love for God, it need not be completely deterred from using even the forms of irony and sarcasm — as scripture itself shows. In some circumstances these may be the only forms of expression holding a promise of success. But their use demands especially careful preparatory self-examination, if self-love is not to lie like a heavy shadow over love for God, and true love is not to be extinguished by delight in inspired phraseology. — M. Schmaus, in *Preaching as a Saving Encounter*.

Political parties that cannot renovate themselves and go on year after year repeating the slogans that once brought them attention either die out slowly or are annihilated once and for all at an election. The Democratic Party in America has renovated itself. The old gang, a survival of Roosevelt's day, has gone for good. The convention at Miami Beach finished it.

# The New Democratic Party

E. L. WAY

THE Democratic Party is dead; long live the Democratic Party. Most of the old gang have been swept away: old time pros like Mayor Richard Daley and his entire Illinois delegation were thrown out; George Meany, AFL-CIO president, who once had all but a veto over who was to be nominated, found that at this convention he had a veto over nothing. Even such veterans as Humphrey (near to tears with his wife consoling him in the photos), and Muskie did not allow their names to be put up for nomination because to the new party, and the new men, they looked what they were relics of the past. The politics of protest swept everything before it at Miami Beach. Yet the McGovern camp of women, blacks, youth, liberals and radicals surprised everyone by its dignity, flexibility, and superb organization. Judging by the surprised comments of the pundits as to the unexpected good behaviour and appeal of the new delegates, one would imagine that they were expecting the convention to look like a performance of *Hair*.

In fact the convention was reported as being 'one of the most disciplined, orderly civil . . . I have ever

witnessed — no booing of Governor Wallace like the booing of Nelson Rockefeller at the Goldwater Republican convention of 1964' (Roscoe Drummond, *The Monitor*, 17 July). Wallace was listened to but ignored, and every action was taken by open majority rule. Everyone was there except the Democratic senators. And one wonders how McGovern will carry out his promises if he is thwarted by the old squad of Democratic congressmen.

### *The Old Politics*

What was at issue in Miami was not whether Senator McGovern or some other should get the party nomination. The battle was over what use should be made of the political process; and it was fought between armies of passionate visionaries on the one hand, and the old party hacks on the other. The visionaries want the political process to be used to create a land where justice and reason prevail; and the old hacks want to dish Nixon in November. (We have our party hacks lying in unconscious strata in the Labour party. Our last real conservative is Enoch, and they have put a fence round him lest he spreads the contagion.)

It has happened before in the Democratic party: the oldest existing political party in the world. The flood of restless, disgruntled public activists sweeps in behind some magnetic or symbolic figure: like Jackson in 1828 or Roosevelt in 1932. If the new wave leads to political victory as it did in 1828 and 1932 the new reform movement then becomes the new political orthodoxy. In time the 'new' movement ceases to move, becomes dull, stale and profitless and in turn is swept away. The Roosevelt era of the Democratic party is now dead and buried.

### *The Idea and the Test*

The general notion behind the latest renewal movement in the Democratic party is that politics and government operated on industrial values have now grown obsolete, remote from American reality. As one black delegate put

it at the convention: Daley can assemble a majority for anything any day of the week. But he will not put together a delegation that represents women, the blacks, Chicanos, and the young people in Illinois.

With a rejuvenated and cleansed Democratic Party the nation can itself be rejuvenated and cleansed. The ultimate test therefore for Senator McGovern's followers will not be electoral victory in November; but rather the way in which it campaigns from the end of the convention until the election: without throwing its principles out of the window. If McGovern fails at that, a new leader will be found. If victory is not won in '72 then it can be won in 1976 — the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Government of the United States.

### *The Old South*

The disaffection of the Old South from the party was to be expected. Ten states there are already being written off. The election, however will not be decided in the South but in California, Illinois, Texas, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan. Organized labour in these states is against McGovern, and this is serious. (On a different level it reminds one of the dockers marching in sympathy with Enoch Powell.) They (labour) are talking about doing their best this time and picking up the pieces in 1976.

The chief organizer of McGovern's campaigns will be Garry Hart, 34, a lawyer from Denver, who has helped greatly in winning the spectacular series of victories in the primaries. The starting point of his strategy will be to concentrate on California and Pennsylvania that Humphrey won or just lost four years ago. Next come the states where Nixon is vulnerable such as Wisconsin and Oregon. McGovern even has popularity with the supporters of Governor Wallace: ". . . a lot of Wallace supporters put McGovern as their second choice". The Meanys and the Daleys will at least remain neutral. The struggle for them is not a question of ideology but of who has the power.

Money is as usual in short supply in the Democratic party. The Republicans will have perhaps \$35 to \$40 million to spend on the election. Gary Hart is hoping the Democrats can raise 25 million for McGovern. The Senator is trying 'to get away from the idea that if you give a lot of money you get an ambassadorship'. (Money as a sole qualification is certainly the key to all kinds of mismanagement not only in government but in the way firms run their business.)

### *And No Kissinger*

Senator McGovern said recently that he wished to take the State Department out of the White House and restore to it the role it should have in shaping foreign policy. "I want a real secretary of state and a real foreign-affairs team . . . I want no Kissinger in my administration."

Under McGovern as President "the secretary of state would be the most important — the most visible — man to fill the position since John Foster Dulles . . ." The Senator intends to select a secretary of state who would be able to deal readily with the Defence Department. He feels that recent administrations have allowed too powerful a voice to the secretary of defence in the area of foreign affairs. Under McGovern the roles would be reversed: less power to the Defence Secretary and more to the Secretary of State. Senator Church is high on McGovern's list for those who might be selected for the post. McGovern would certainly not emerge as his own secretary of state. Kissinger might be a brilliant man, but he has his prejudices and blind spots, and can't possibly absorb everything in the field of foreign affairs. The greatest blunder to result on this too heavy reliance on one man was the upset caused in Japan because that nation was not advised or consulted before the trip to Peking. The eclipse in the role of the State Department began in the 1950s with McCarthy. The people in the Department, Senator McGovern thinks, became too nervous to perform well in the field of foreign affairs, and many good men left it altogether. To the many people who are nervous of McGovern in action abroad,



I would recommend a study of what he thinks on the subject. His ideas extend far beyond getting the last American out of Vietnam within 90 days of his assuming the presidency.

### *McGovern's Running Mate*

After the disclosures concerning Tom Eagleton's health had forced him to stand down, Senator McGovern had the embarrassment of searching publicly for a running mate; and one after another of the party's leading or lesser lights turned him down: Ted Kennedy and Humphrey said no, Edmund Muskie characteristically thought about it for 36 hours before turning it down. Finally Robert Sargent Shriver was available and McGovern awarded him the prize. (Earlier when there was more choice Shriver was fifth or sixth on the Senator's list.)

Shriver says "For 250 years my family has been in public office" — not as dog-catchers either — and his mother said "We've been here since the 1600s. We're rooted in the land in Maryland."

Shriver, however, has built his own reputation; not an easy thing to do as a member of the Kennedy clan. He founded the Peace Corps and made a success of it when everybody prophesied that it would fail; he was head of LBJ's war on poverty; and would have been his running mate in 1968 if LBJ had not dropped out of the race. He went instead as an ambassador to France, where he worked an 18-hour day and dropped a few bricks. He is a Catholic, and has shrewd political instincts. He ought to run a campaign during the election — for example to win over the urban blacks. He did a good job for President Kennedy.

# Readings at Mass

FRANCIS FENN, S.J.

**R**EADERS of my notes last month may have reflected that if Matthew, as one of the Twelve, was present when Peter professed his belief in Jesus as Messiah, then he ought to have known whether our Lord's promises to Peter were made on that occasion or not.

But there is considerable difficulty in accepting that the apostle Matthew was the author of the book that bears his name. Ancient testimony, more or less reliable, tells us that the apostle was author of a book of "sayings" in Aramaic (the current Jewish language), and many have taken this to mean our Gospel. But the Gospel as we have it in Greek cannot be re-translated into Aramaic: it contains, for example, "wordplays" that are possible only in Greek. There is, moreover, no doubt about this Gospel's dependence on Mark in the narrative passages — this is true even of the apostle Matthew's call (9, 9). One therefore has to conclude that the author of our Gospel is unknown; though this, of course, makes no difference to its standing as a writing inspired by God. Nor was it thought in any way dishonest in those times for writers to attribute their work to a well-known person whom they honoured as a master.

The gospel reading for September 3rd continues the "Petrine" account in Matthew 16. It includes our Lord's first prediction of his passion and resurrection and a saying which you heard read from the same Gospel (10, 38) in briefer form on July 2:

"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (16, 24-25).

Luke has "take up his cross daily", which gives a more metaphorical sense. Using the cross as an everyday symbol as we do, it is difficult for us to appreciate the harshness

of the original saying, which probably reflects the persecution to which the early Church was subject.

Denial of self does not mean (or only mean) giving up some good thing which we could normally enjoy (like smoking in Lent): it means saying that self is nothing and has no claims. St. Paul says the same about our Lord: "he emptied himself" (Philippians 2, 7). The latter part of our text means that the preservation of our personality is achieved only by yielding it entirely to Christ. One who saves his life may lose himself.

God's unconditional claim upon us is the subject also of today's other two readings. Jeremiah was sent "to root up and tear down, to build up and to plant" (1, 10), but up till now God has made him proclaim only violence and ruin for his people. This has meant constant persecution. But if he says "I will not think about him, I will not speak in his name any more", then there "seems to be a fire burning in my heart" — which he cannot bear.

St. Paul presents the matter in its most attractive light. He appeals to us by the "mercy" of God of which he has been writing in this letter to the Romans to "offer" your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God" (12, 1). "Bodies" means the living organism — man as a whole. There is an implied contrast with the dead animals which were the subject of Jewish and pagan sacrifice. Opposition here comes from the "behaviour of the world around you" to which we must not conform ourselves: we must be *transformed* by the working of the Spirit within us, of which St. Paul has written in chapter 8. And the motive is God's love shown to us in Christ: "the love of Christ overwhelms us when we reflect that one man has died for all . . . so that living men should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life for them" (2 Cor. 5, 14-15; quoted in Eucharistic Prayer IV).

We have already thought about the topic raised in the next Sunday's reading from *Romans* (13, 8-10): the relationship between *love* and *law*. Here I can only urge

you to try to get hold of and read Fr. Lyonnet's lucid treatment in *The Christian lives by the Spirit* (especially pp. 160 and 204) which I referred to in a footnote in July.

The gospel readings for the 2nd and 3rd Sundays of this month are taken from Matthew 18, which can be called a sermon on the Church. It deals with the spirit which should be shown by members of the Church in their relations with one another — where church (v.17) means local community. The opening of the parable of the unmerciful servant (Sept. 17) might be rendered: "The situation in the church is like that of a king who wished to settle his accounts with his servants". As in all true parables, it is not the details that matter, but the point of the whole story. Here it is that since the forgiveness of God knows no limits, neither should our own. We are back at the question of "self-denial": if we do not renounce our claims on our fellow-men, neither can we ask God to dismiss his claims against us.

We may well sympathise with the labourers in the vineyard (Sept. 24) who had worked all day and yet got the same *denarius* (a subsistence wage) as those who had been taken on in the afternoon. The capitalist of that time was the master of his money ("Have I no right to do what I like with my own?"). But this, of course, is not the point of the parable. Told in the first place for Jewish Christians, it teaches that Gentiles, though late-comers, are admitted to the blessings of God's reign on an equal footing with Jews. This was a big problem in the infant Church; and it must be admitted that the saying tacked on at the end ("the last will be first, and the first last") hardly fits this situation.

But the parable can have a wider meaning: whether one's call to faith comes early or (as in the case of the penitent thief) late in life — this has no relevance. The gift of God is entirely gratuitous: in this context the question of the owner of the vineyard is very much to the point.

# Comprehensive Social Security

J. M. JACKSON

IN 1948 most people would have felt that Britain had a very comprehensive social security system. Since then, the position has changed. Our Social security system is basically the same as it was then. Any changes have been in the direction of improving the system and either making it more comprehensive or (and this is perhaps the more important) improving the scale of benefits. What has happened is that we have become much more aware of the weaknesses of the system that was created in 1948. The failings of the present system may be listed under the following headings: (1) the inadequacy of the level of benefit under National Insurance; (2) the anomalies whereby different scales of benefit may be enjoyed depending upon the exact circumstances of a case, even though the needs of those concerned may be similar; (3) major gaps in the system, whereby certain types of risk are not covered or certain types of person are not covered.

## *Inadequate Benefits*

The Beveridge proposals of 1942 were intended to provide a system of National Insurance which would provide every insured person with an adequate level of income in the event of the main foreseeable occasions of need — in particular unemployment, sickness, retirement and widowhood. In addition, there was to be a system of National Assistance that would cover other eventualities and would be subject to a means test. The dual system of



insurance benefits payable as of right in the event of specified events occurring and National Assistance (now Supplementary Benefit) payable subject to means test has remained. There has, however, always been one important difference in this set-up from that proposed by Beveridge. This difference lies in the fact that the level of insurance benefit has always been below the subsistence level. The person drawing National Insurance benefit has never received from this source enough money to enable him to maintain a reasonable standard of life. If he has had no other source of income, he has been forced to struggle on below the poverty line or else to seek supplementation under the means tested assistance scheme.

The National Insurance scheme was never intended by Beveridge to provide for all needs. If a flat-rate scheme of benefits and contributions had been introduced at a level that would have brought beneficiaries up to whatever poverty line was chosen, there would still have been plenty of scope for individuals and industry to introduce supplementary schemes. Above all, it would not have been unreasonable to expect a state scheme to provide for a certain minimum scale of benefit and to leave individual or industry action to provide more generous income-related benefits for higher paid workers. What is unsatisfactory about the National Insurance scheme is that it does not even provide everyone it covers with a minimum subsistence. Supplementation is essential, either through voluntary provision or through the state assistance scheme.

The introduction of earnings related benefits into the scheme has gone some way towards remedying this defect, but not very far. The earnings related supplement for sickness and unemployment benefit now means that the higher paid worker may be brought well clear of the poverty line. The lower paid worker, however, is still likely to be well below the poverty line. The graduated pension scheme is of only very limited value in supplementing the levels of pensions at present and will remain so for the foreseeable future. Radical reform of our pension scheme is desirable,

but over a long period action has been delayed by the submission of different schemes by opposition parties which have failed to gain power (or governments which have fallen from power) at the next election.

### *Some Major Anomalies*

It might be thought that a man who is prevented from working by illness will have certain needs. These needs will be the same whether his illness is one which he has contracted as a result of his employment or one that might affect anyone. Nevertheless, a man who is off work because of an industrial disease or accident will be entitled to a higher scale of benefit under the Industrial Injuries Insurance scheme than a man whose sickness has some other origin and draws ordinary National Insurance benefit. Apart from the higher scale of benefit, there was until recently another anomaly. The seriously handicapped person who came under the Industrial Injuries scheme was entitled to an attendance allowance whereas no such allowance was payable in respect of other sickness or injuries. Yet if a person is so seriously disabled that he cannot be left alone, the need for payment of an attendance allowance is surely the same, regardless of cause?

There is a further source of benefit to a person injured at work or contracting an industrial illness. The Industrial Injuries Insurance scheme is based on the idea that a worker who suffers injury or sickness in the course of his employment is entitled to certain benefits. The scheme is an insurance against certain risks which may be regarded as inherent in all forms of employment. The entitlement to this benefit is no way dependent upon any fault on the part of the employer. If, however, the employer has been negligent and the worker suffers as a consequence, then the worker still has the right to sue for damages in the courts. So too has anyone who is injured as a result of another's negligence. If this remedy is available, the injured person will be entitled to a far more generous scale of benefit. Industrial Injuries Insurance may be more

generous than ordinary National Insurance but it may still leave people below the subsistence level and certainly a lot worse off than they were when in employment. If, however, a person is incapacitated by the negligence of another, he will be entitled to such damages as will compensate as fully as possible for the injury inflicted. Damages for the suffering caused, the loss of certain faculties, the reduced ability to enjoy life are necessarily rather arbitrary. But it should be possible at least in theory to calculate fairly accurately the damages required to compensate for loss of earning capacity.

But does it make sense to have four different levels of benefit? We have National Insurance, Industrial Injuries, Supplementary Benefit which will be higher than either of the others but only available subject to a means test, and damages for negligence which are intended to represent full compensation. When the question is put in this way, the range of different benefits appears illogical. Nevertheless, it is possible to make a case for different scales of benefit. Let us think of ordinary sickness first. Clearly some provision must be made for providing the sick with some minimum income that will enable them to maintain a reasonable standard of living. We may consider that the scheme ought to provide at least a minimum subsistence and that there should be no need to resort to a means-tested supplement. A change of this kind would, of course, involve higher contributions than the present National Insurance scheme, and might well necessitate a system of income related contributions in return for either a flat-rate benefit or a benefit that gave proportionately more to lower paid workers.

Is there a case for higher benefits for persons contracting an industrial illness or having an accident at work? This is not an easy question. There is something to be said for making industry accept the cost of relatively generous provision for those injured in the service of industry. As for the case where, for example, industrial illness or injury is the result of negligence by the

employer, it is surely only elementary justice that the negligent employer should be required to compensate the worker as fully as possible? Why should the worker suffer because of the negligence of his employer? The fact that it would be impossible to maintain the income of every sick and injured person at this level is no reason for denying this elementary justice to the victim of negligence. Certain risks are inherent in life, and we must all recognise the possibility that certain events will leave us worse off than we would otherwise be. A social security scheme must do what it can to cushion the blow, and there must be some scope for discussion of the exact extent to which it can do this. But where loss is the result of another's fault, we should not deny the injured party full redress nor do anything that would encourage people to act less responsibly.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Some Remaining Gaps*

Beveridge proposed an insurance scheme that would cover the major foreseeable eventualities, or the major eventualities that he thought could be the appropriate subject of an insurance scheme. There are other classes of need than those covered by National Insurance. At present the scheme provides cover for virtually all persons in employment (and their dependents) and non-employed and self-employed persons. The cover for dependents, however, is restricted to eventualities befalling the insured person. In other words, the man who is unemployed will be entitled to draw a scale of benefit that takes account of the fact that he has a wife and children. There is, however, no cover in respect of any eventuality affecting any of his dependents. In particular, the scheme provides no cover against the disability of his wife and the possible need in the event of such disability of getting somebody else

1. It may, of course, be argued that the victim of negligence is most likely to collect his damages when the negligent party is covered by insurance. There is, therefore, the danger that once the insurance premium is paid, there may be little incentive to exercise care. It could be argued that whilst motor insurance increases the chances of an injured person collecting damages, it also encourages less responsible drivers to exercise less care and thus increase the chances of accidents occurring.

to look after the children.

This gap is perhaps the most serious in the present social security set-up. There are a good many eventualities that are not covered by National Insurance, but there is always the means-tested Supplementary Benefit available for those in any kind of need. Any discussion of closing other gaps in the scheme therefore hinge on the whole idea of benefits as of right versus means-tested benefits. The case of the disabled wife, however, is a real gap because it is not adequately covered by the availability of Supplementary Benefit. There are only two solutions available at present where a woman is not only incapacitated but cannot be left — either she must go to hospital or the husband must stay home and look after her, relying on Supplementary Benefit. Obviously neither is an ideal solution, and both are costly solutions for the community. It would clearly cost far less for the state to provide a home help in such cases or to include a financial benefit in the social security scheme that would enable the family to hire such help.

### *A New System*

What kind of new system could be devised? One of the most important questions would be whether any modified scheme would place more or less reliance on means-tested benefits. There is a general dislike of means testing, but this is really directed towards the kind of means test at present operated by the Department of Health and Social Security. The idea of a negative incomes tax has been canvassed, and this would be a form of means test but not in an objectionable form. No questions would be asked of the person entitled to benefit that would not be asked of others who would be liable to pay income tax.

Such a scheme could work under certain conditions. It would probably be essential to modify and simplify the present system of income tax. This is based on an annual assessment. It would be much simpler if tax were assessed weekly. A PAYE coding would indicate



certain allowances per week, and anyone earning more than this would pay the appropriate rate of tax; anyone earning less would receive a supplement to his earnings.<sup>2</sup> Present Family Allowances could be abolished. The full benefit could be received by some people as an allowance against tax whilst others would be entitled to a negative income tax in place of Family Allowance. Such a scheme might give rise to some difficulties. One would concern the person who has an adequate but irregular income. It would probably be necessary in the main to confine a scheme of this kind to those in regular employment and pensioners. One would not want to create a system whereby the author of a best seller collects a cheque for £10,000 twice a year and is treated as having no income in fifty weeks of the year and entitled therefore to draw a negative income tax.

A more serious problem is whether some kind of negative income tax should entirely supercede an insurance scheme. Reliance on a negative income tax would mean that there would be no gaps in the social security scheme. Automatic cover would be given to everyone including those who fall outside National Insurance now and who would have to apply for Supplementary Benefit.<sup>3</sup> The income tax codings would have to take into account other earnings than a man's principal employment. This could mean that benefits were only paid when needed to bring a man above the poverty line, and there would be nothing comparable to the present National Insurance benefits which are paid regardless of other income.

Such an arrangement would mean that all urgent

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2. This would alter the present situation where income tax allowances are such that a person begins to pay tax whilst still below the poverty line. The allowances under this system would be the minimum necessary to enable a household to keep above the poverty line.

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3. It might be asked whether it would cover the case of the disabled housewife raised earlier. The answer is that it easily could. All that would be required would be an additional tax allowance for a disabled wife. The tax liability of the household would be reduced accordingly, and household income, if low enough would qualify for negative income tax.

needs were met without a means test of the present kind. There would be no need to supplement insurance benefits as at present. The scheme might have administrative savings, and whilst closing many gaps might not cost significantly more than our present schemes. A negative income tax scheme could not provide the income related benefits that most people would regard as desirable. A basic minimum is all very well but this would represent a very serious fall in living standards for a higher paid worker. Consider the case of a pensioner. Our negative income tax scheme might provide a married couple with an income of £10 a week on retirement. If a man contributes to a pension scheme that will provide him with an income of £10 a week, this brings him up to the poverty line and he does not qualify for any benefit under the negative income tax scheme. He is no better off than the man who has not been contributing to any pension scheme.

This article is not producing a blueprint for a new social security scheme. There is a possible case for unifying National Insurance and Industrial Injuries Insurance and extending the coverage in certain directions. Whether any scheme could be devised which would provide an adequate income for all in need without an objectionable means test is open to some doubt. The most serious difficulty is the one just raised. Can such a scheme operate without being unfair to those who seek to make some additional provision on their own against certain eventualities. If this conflict could be resolved, there would be a strong case for looking to such a unified scheme.

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**Can there be an effective code of morals without religion? How can young people best prepare themselves for a holy and happy Catholic marriage? Is it fantastic to suppose that Europe will have to be reconverted from present day missionary countries? Isn't it the government's duty to protect the rights of citizens?**

## **Any Questions?**

**WILLIAM LAWSON S.J.**

**Can there be an effective code of morals without religion?**

No. To be effective, a code of good behaviour must be established by reference to an absolute personal good; otherwise any judgment of what is right in conduct is as authoritative as any other, and that judgment will prevail which is backed by might. The absolute good can only be God; and ethics, to be valid and universally applicable, must start with religion.

Ethical Societies, Humanist Associations, and the like, profess a deep concern for human beings. They claim to be more devoted than believers to the good of the human race because they must take responsibility for that good wholly upon themselves without the "escapism" of dependence on a Supreme Being. But their primary assumption that there is no God makes them incapable of giving an unassailable value to man, woman or child. Denying the existence of God, they must be materialists. Nothing exists but matter, in various forms. Man is matter — the same essential stuff as the ground he walks on and the food he eats. There is no absolute reason why he should not himself be walked on or eaten. Humanists can't get on

without using the word "person"; but the meaning they attach to the word is utterly different from the meaning we attach to it. For them, a person is the individual of a species of matter, further evolved than any other species and dominant in the universe, but having no spiritual life by which alone a human being can be a self who is an end and not just a means. The humanist is logical when he recommends that human beings be treated as superfluous animals and be "put down" as one might put down a decrepit dog, or drown a litter of kittens. If there is no personal creator, there are no human persons; and there is no heaven to help us if humanists come to power and decree that we are expendable.

### **How can young people best prepare themselves for a holy and happy Catholic marriage?**

First of all, by being holy and Catholic on the way to marriage. No one can be better than a perfect Christian; no one should be less than the unique perfection of which he or she is capable. That basic Catholic goodness should be the foundation of life in any particular state, as priest, or religious, or husband and wife. Those engaged to be married should enrich their spiritual life as fully as they can by drawing on the grace of God in prayer and the use of the Sacraments. More than most people they should be aware that you bring your best self to those you love; and the best self is above all else supernaturally alive, strong and beautiful.

It is a good idea, also, to "look where you are going". Love seeks union; and marriage provides for a lifelong union of minds and hearts. Nobody can survive in life without good company; and the married have always the companion of their choice. But companionship which, I should think, is the abiding joy and comfort of marriage, doesn't just happen. It is compounded of all the virtues of charity — patience, kindness, forbearance, compassion, tact, understanding, unselfishness, good humour, self-

command, speech and silence in an inspired alternation. Is that enough? There's much more, which the happily married will tell you about.

The about-to-be-married should also have a look at the responsibility of bringing children into this world with the duty of helping them to make their own way into the next world of God. If that responsibility doesn't make them tremble, they should postpone their marriage until they have learned the facts of life.

**Is it fantastic to suppose that Europe will have to be reconverted to Christianity by missionaries from the present missionary countries?**

Before your fantasy becomes fact, the present de-christianization of Europe would have to go so far that the remaining native clergy and religious were unequal to the task of caring for the surviving christians and trying to make inroads on the non-religious majority. Because of defections from religious orders and from the ranks of the clergy, and because of the falling-off of vocations, there is already a shortage of shepherds of the flock; and the appeal of technology, as well as the weakening of Catholicism by false doctrine and near-schism, make it seem at times that the defenders and propagators of the faith are fighting a losing battle. But there are signs, thank God, that faith is reviving.

The defections, sad though they are, may well have purified the Church by ridding her of poison. Priests, religious and people have been made more sharply aware of their responsibilities before God for their genuineness of faith in Christ and for their loyalty to the Pope and the bishops. Perhaps religion, though within narrower limits than before, is more intense — and it is quality, not quantity, by which the life of the Church should be measured.

If the Church in Europe should fail, and the promise of vocations in Africa has been realised, then the mis-



sionary spirit which is inseparable from allegiance to Christ would bring African priests and religious to the work of reconverting Europe. That kind of goodness has happened before. The Irish who were brought into the Church by missionaries from continental Europe — St. Patrick head and shoulders above the rest — became the apostles of large parts of the continent, returning good for good.

**Isn't it a government's duty to protect the rights of citizens? And, if so, what about the rights to public decency and to peaceful enjoyment of artificial heat and light?**

Certainly. The work of a government is to preserve and promote the common good. If it fails to do that, it is useless for its main purpose. The citizens, who all depend on it, are let down. Their rights are nominal merely, unless they can be enjoyed. One of those rights is freedom from offence to their self-respect and dignity in public displays, shows, entertainments and manners. At present, offence abounds, on the stage and the cinema screen, hoardings and book-stalls. So, what should government do?

Another right of citizens is to be governed according to law. Government itself is subject to law. In performing its duty of protecting rights, government must not infringe them. A preliminary step in the banishment of public indecency is legislation which defines such offences and imposes penalties for offenders. You must know that with the best will in the world (and what government is *that* good?) a government's lawyers find it impossible to frame definitions which are both reasonable and undodgeable. Besides, opposition to proposed legislation in defence of decency is mounted not only by pressure-groups with no morals and a large appetite for profits but also by liberals who deplore restrictive laws. Nor can government count on public support, the public being, as a rule, afflicted with apathy.

The second right you mention — on the occasion, I

should think, of the recent miner's strike — is to be governed by a government and not by a section of the community. That is an essential of the rule of law. Legislation to make central government effective would certainly have the support of a public which has been tried to the limit.

**At the Reformation in England great wealth was stolen from Catholics? Have the present possessors of that wealth a duty of restitution?**

I should think that by this time they have a prescriptive right to what they hold. If, in the most unlikely event, the whole country were to return to the Catholic Church, there would surely be an official declaration from the competent authority (as there was, I think, in the reign of Mary Tudor) that there must be no reclaiming of what used to be Catholic property. In any case, after four hundred years of deals in property, no one but the lawyers would benefit from demands for restoration. The cathedrals would again be open for Catholic worship, as would such pre-reformation churches as remain. The surviving religious houses could not be given back to the Orders which were expelled from them without legal costs which would far exceed the value of the buildings and estates.

As things are, most Protestants who think about the matter at all would be of the opinion that Catholics were ousted from property to which they had no right because of their adulteration of pure Christianity. Even if they felt twinges of conscience over the disappropriations by the Protestant Tudors, they could not, as individuals, take any action to settle their conscience. The chief possessions of the Established Church belong to the country.

A family whose wealth began and grew from the spoliation of the monasteries, might, if it became Catholic in a body, hand over vast sums to their recovered religion in England; but that would be out of devotion only, and not from obligation. If they chose, they could, in good

conscience, keep whatever they have, even the amount stolen originally from the monks.

**The Second Vatican Council reminded us of St. Paul's Exhortation to pray without ceasing, but neglected to tell us how to obey the Apostle? Can it genuinely be done?**

That reminder by the Council is in the Constitution, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, on the liturgy. The reference to St. Paul is 1 Thess. 5:17. Our Lord Himself told us to keep on praying (Luke 18:1), so we must be able to pray at all times — God cannot order us to do what is impossible.

As it is plain that we cannot be engaged all the time in an activity of prayer, reciting psalms or prayers of our own composition, or focussing our mind on God and what belongs to His love and service, there must be a *state* which genuinely counts as prayer and which is attainable by all of us, given our acceptance and use of divine grace. That state is a direction given to our mind and heart by the faith we have in God, our determination to please Him, and the will we have to put Him first in all our plans and purposes. We try to love God; and, as far as we can, we belong to Him deliberately. That decision makes us godward by choice, and our very existence is a movement towards God. St. Paul says: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever else you do, do all for the glory of God". We can obey because we love God, and, loving Him, we are permanently in His presence. Without necessarily advertng to it, we have always a sense of it. If that sense vanished we should at once feel cold and lonely. That is the unceasing prayer which spontaneously will break out into active prayer.

**Many of our traditional practices of penance have been abrogated. What do you think of**

## these changes in the penitential discipline of the Church?

The purpose of them, I suppose, is to involve the responsibility of the faithful for their own progress in Christian perfection, so that their purification of their lives will, by being of their own choice, be more deeply spiritual and more lasting. The changes could also indicate a judgment in the authorities that the prescribed practices were more and more neglected or at least resented, and that it was better to remove laws from the statute book when their presence in it led to contempt for law in general.

Although the obligations of lasting and abstinence have gone, the Christian duty of doing penance remains; and its fulfilment is the more necessary these days as, in the affluent countries, the material hardships, which used to be part of most lives, have disappeared with the advances of technology. Other hardships like rush and noise have appeared; but what used to be luxuries for the table are now staple diet, and self-indulgence can be everybody's temptation. I should have thought that the mitigation in prescribed penances demanded a frequent and urgent preaching of penance. The promulgation of the relaxed code was accompanied with the bare statement that penance was a private matter, to be attended to conscientiously. That is an injunction so general in its terms and so casual that it makes no impression. We need to be reminded of our addictions and self-indulgences, those of the body, but those of the mind as well. What about the stultifying and time-wasting habit of listening to the news every time it is broadcast or of watching television as though mesmerized, just because we haven't the strength of mind to turn off the set and rouse ourselves to do something useful?

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# God's Message to Mankind

IT is true that criticism of the penny catechism and still more of the then ways of using it, were being voiced by some of us in our little periodical way back in 1919 (to be exact). So much is no more than due to our writers and readers and supporters of those days, of whom many remain until this present, though some are fallen asleep.

All of them, I am sure, would join me in saying that the penny catechism, despite all its glaring defects, had and still has one good point: it does treat the Catholic faith as a *message*, of facts and teachings revealed by God, and to be transmitted by the Christian Church to each generation of mankind.

Some of our "newer" catechists, on the other hand, seem to have scrapped the message — the very idea of any message — altogether; they speak quite a lot about the "gospel", but when they go into details about it what they mean is a general improvement in people's interpersonal relationships, along with a respectful bow towards Jesus Christ as being quite a pioneer in that field.

Right personal relationships indeed matter enormously, and even the penny catechism does not entirely neglect them. The catechetical reformers of fifty years ago made a special point of them, especially as to better relations at all stages between teacher and taught; indeed that was the point we actually started from, that the Faith cannot be effectively transmitted by methods of compulsion, such methods being on the whole counter-productive, especially with school-children from indifferent homes. This simple bit of common-sense, strange to say, seemed a novelty at that time. But the swing-back of the silly pendulum has now gone equally too far the other way. What some people are saying now is that religion cannot be taught directly at all (except perhaps to interested adults), only mentioned timidly, not as good news, but as a possible by-way worth



exploring in the course of the proper study of mankind, which is man, not God.

Well, certainly again it is only common-sense to begin with people where they are, and build religion-teaching on their basic interests and needs instead of just boring them; and this was fully recognized by the "innovating" catechists between the wars. But let us face it frankly: the present exaggerated "anthropological approach" is just a sad non-sense, excusable enough in liberal-protestant circles, but a pitiable exhibition in anybody who has all the centuries and richness of Catholic experience to draw from. — From a letter of Canon F. H. Drinkwater in the *Clergy Review* for January, 1972.

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"For twenty years, without any such intention on my part, I have been considered rather advanced in the world of theology. But now I suddenly find myself obliged to side with the camp of the defenders of the traditional and central positions of the Church . . . I get the sudden impression that a radical opposition has sprung up within the Church. It is inside the Church we must fight against secularisation, desacralisation and similar things. In the coming years it is within the Church itself that non-Christian heresies will arise. These heretics do not mean to make us leave the Church; nevertheless we must bring all our resources to bear on maintaining tradition and we must answer them with an absolutely clear refusal, an unmistakeable condemnation. This latter, of course, only after a serious investigation inspired by love, in a spirit of true dialogue, and trying to understand their basic ideas. But we must take account of these, and we have good reason to do so, for in the name of the progress of the Church as well as in that of our time and its tasks, they attack the very substance of Christianity and aim at becoming acclimatized in the Church."

Karl Rahner, S.J.

# Book Review

*Cri du Coeur*

**The Last Mass of Paul VI** by Tito Casini; Britons Publishing Company (Beamish House, South View, Chawleigh, Chulmleigh, N. Devon); pp. 182; £1.50.

A lot of people who read this book will rate it as dotty and its author as disloyal to the Church. I think they would be quite wrong to do so, for it takes little more than a careful and perceptive reading of Tito Casini's pages to refute both charges. He is a man deeply in love with the Church and her ancient liturgy. He is also Italy's best-known Catholic writer.

Because of his love, Tito Casini has been shattered, as many have been and still are, by the liturgical changes that have followed the Second Vatican Council. Here he registers his protest against recent innovations, liturgical and disciplinary, in the form of a novel; an autumn night's dream, the Author calls it, that is half reality, half nightmare. He puts Pope Paul in a plane headed for Peking where he is to bring to a "successful" conclusion a dialogue already begun between the Vatican and Communist China. The scene of operations is the passenger cabin of the giant plane. There, surrounded by his entourage, the Holy Father reviews anxiously and restlessly the events of his troubled pontificate. It is through the medium of this anxiety-ridden meditation of Pope Paul that Casini speaks his own mind, putting into the mind of the Holy Father the deep anxieties that are his own at this moment. It is a daring medium, open to arrogant and, indeed, insolent misuse. Casini, in this book, can be accused of neither. His anguish is too genuine and too deep, his love of the Church and the Holy Father too profound; he is rooted too deep in the whole tradition of his Faith to make that possible. As a result, Casini's book, critical though it is of so much

that goes on today, is immensely eloquent in the profession of its Faith. I make no secret of the fact that it moved me profoundly. Far-fetched it may be in the structure of its plot; but so, too, was Robert Hugh Benson's *Lord of the World*. Here, too, as in Benson, there is a solid core of truth that merits close attention. It is in no way dimmed — on the contrary, lightened, if anything — by the Author's passionate sincerity. He *feels* his case as only one who has the Faith of centuries in his bones can feel it, yet his love for the Holy Father remains complete despite his criticism. In the final lines of his book he begs Pope Paul's forgiveness: "Holy Father, grant us our petition; make the beauty of our dream come quickly true; and let the hand, which once was raised in paternal severity to admonish this your loving son, now be raised again over him, but this time to bless and console. Any excess of which he may seem guilty comes solely from excess of love".

There is a world of difference between Casini's approach in this book and that, say, of the thirty-three theologians in their arrogant and ill-conceived manifesto. It is the difference, really, between pride and humility. The theologians interpret reform as progressive liberation from ecclesiastical limitations. Thereby they reveal themselves as caught and badly caught by the spirit of the contemporary world, whose major vice today is to confuse freedom with autonomy: the approach of Hans Kung and his friends to the problems of renewal is essentially teen-aged, the outlook revealed that of the immature — indeed, at times, retarded — adolescent. At the core of their insolent document is a rejection of dependence, which is no more, really, and no less than a rejection of their human condition. There is nothing truly sensible and progressive (in the right sense of the word) about their statement. It is, in fact, thoroughly reactionary, for what could be more reactionary than to deny the truth of what you are and seek to live without it. All the thirty-three theologians have done is beat a retreat to the Garden of Eden or,



if you like, the fall of the Angels. The cry at the core of their childish document is the same as that of Lucifer, "Non Serviam", I will not serve, and I will show, thereby, my total independence of God. To be myself, in other words, I will deny my origins: can you not see that, by so doing, you deny the whole of yourself?

Casini is totally different. In fact, I feel like apologising to him, at this point, for even comparing him with the thirty-three. However, he will understand. Running right through his novel is total acknowledgement of his complete dependence on God. In this true sense it is shot through, like its Author, with a deep humility. He seeks no liberation from the Church and its discipline, he is quite without desire to do anything but obey Christ's Vicar on earth. His words are spoken neither in anger nor pride, nor out of any arrogant desire to place himself outside authority. His words are spoken in tears; in desperation at what he thinks of as the sundering of his heritage. It is the pleading of a son with the father he loves that we are made to hear in Tito Casini's pages; one who feels with the whole of his being that, somehow, so many of the changes — particularly liturgical — that have come to the Church since the Council are wrong, unable to endure because quite without roots. What ever there may be here, there is no pride; only tears of sorrow for a heritage that seems to have gone by the board.

Paul Crane, S.J.